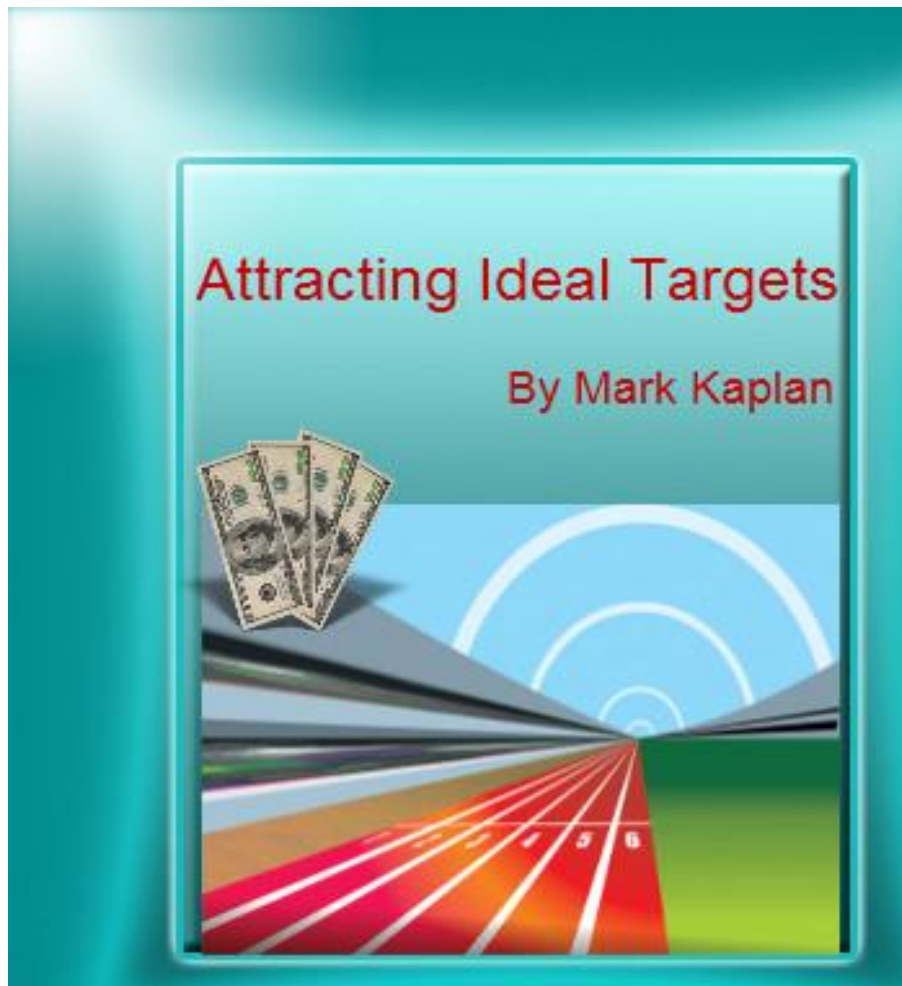




New Customer Development



Attracting Ideal Targets

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Introduction

This business environment is radically different from a few years ago. Executives and Consumers have much different pressures, objectives, and choices.

It follows that approaching them and gaining their trust would require different practices.

“The Art of Selling has undergone more changes in the past few years than in any other time in history.” Joseph Sugarman, Chairman, BluBlocker Corporation

“Sales organizations of tomorrow will have to be fundamentally different from those today” Geoffrey Eitland, Vice President of Sales, Staples, Inc.

“At a time when executives face increased pressure to get more done in less time... Jim Fowler, CEO, Jigsaw.

“With a Wealth of information available via the Internet, why does a prospect need a salesperson?” Lynn Schleeter, director, Center for Sales Innovation

Who Are Your Ideal Targets?

The first step in the process of attracting targets and converting them to loyal customers is determining your ideal targets.

Your ideal targets are the organizations that most need your Unique Selling Proposition (USP). The USP is the particular service that you provide better than your competition.

On the internet it is defined by keywords. There are high traffic and low traffic keywords. The way you investigate high traffic keywords is on Google Ad Words which provides a free service. The best words have more revenue value for people willing to pay for them.

Google Ad words can be accessed with <http://bit.ly/9FqW8F>

Then you can determine the competition for those ad words by Googling them. The numbers at the top of the page will say something like 1-10 of 23,000,000.

How Competitive is Your Site?

Determining which niche you should participate in is determined, at the start, by how much Authority your site has.

That is determined in part by the volume and density of keywords on your site. It is secondly determined by how much traffic you have on your site.

With these two main factors, Search Engines will determine how competitive you are for the keywords and which site should be at the top of Page One Google for those keywords.

In Which Niches Can You Compete?

The highest traffic niches are generally the pages with the fewest words. For example, in Freight there are several individual words that have millions of pages of competition like Transportation, Freight, Shipping, Air Cargo, Trucking and so forth.

Most sites could not begin to compete in the single word categories that describe their industries. Therefore we create the long tail or the limiters which hopefully get you into the highest traffic niche where you can be dominant.

For example, Fulfillment is a very large niche. Competition can be reduced by selecting more words. "Product Fulfillment" is a start. "Midwest Product

Fulfillment” narrows it more. “Midwest Literature Fulfillment Chicago” really takes it down.

Sometimes it takes a professional to help with your words or sometimes you can do it with enough research.

Then the words have to be properly incorporated into your site.

Search Engine Optimization SEO

This is the practice of setting up a site with elements that are highly rated by Search Engines when they compare you to other sites.

It is the optimizing of your keyword strategy so that you are more competitive than other sites using the same words and targeting the same audience.

Search Engines want to see your keywords in the eight or nine specific locations and they want them to be used properly.

Some of the areas Search Engines expect to see them are in the Source Code, an opening paragraph, page titles, headlines, and image tags.

The next important facet is finding the ideal targets when they need your services.

Entering the Buying Cycle

The Buying Cycle for Prospects can run from a few weeks to a few years. The earlier in the cycle they see your information, the better.

A Sherpa Marketing survey indicated that in 8 out of 10 cases, the executives selected the Provider rather than having responded to a solicitation. This signifies that your Pro-Active approaches must take a new direction to be effective.

Whereas most firms have pro-active customer building strategies that are often a combination of Traditional and Digital marketing, they now have to reflect on the needs of the new era and communicate accordingly.

Seth Godin, founder of Permission Based Marketing, has written a book about combining traditional businesses with New Media marketing called “Meatball Sundae”. The title says it all.

Whether or not firms believe in Social Media, the message of Social Media is that the global culture has changed to Permission Based communications. 8 out of 10 executives would agree. The art of Social Media is developing relationships out of mutual interests and trust.

In “Fearless Competitor” Jerry Ogden says that the Buying Cycle usually starts with executives or even committees seeking information to solve a particular problem. Eventually in the process, the Buyer may start looking for a Provider.

If you are a valuable and reliable source of information and give the information freely, you are likely to be trusted.

Getting the Attention of the Buyer

When you are using systems to attract a Buyer whether you have a Product or Service the process is principally the same.

The Buyer must find you, trust the information and then trust you as a source. This can evolve into a relationship.

When we approach the Buyer directly by phone call or email we have at least three obstacles. We may not be known. We may not know if they are in a Buying Cycle for our Service. We may not understand their objectives and core principals.

Things to consider about the Timing Cycle if you are Soliciting:

- Is the right executive available,
- Is he receptive,
- Does he have the time at the moment,
- Does he need what we have to offer
- Is he the right person
- Does he have the authority
- When does he need our services or products
- What do we know about his company
- What do we know about his industry

The Timing Cycle exists regardless of whether we approach the Buyer or they seek us.

Chances are if we are calling on them, the percentages of finding a Buyer who has our Product or Service as a Priority at that moment is small. If it's on their agenda, but on the bottom, they are not going to take much time to consider our offering now.

On the other hand, when they are looking for information to solve a problem, the Problem has worked its way up their agenda. Therefore it can be so much more efficient if we are supplying information when it is actually desired.

When they contact us, they will take the time to explain what we need to know about them.

Capturing Prospects

There are several tools that can attract our first Prospect Contact.

- One of the best is, of course, an optimized Website.
- Secondly is an Informative Newsletter (even better if it is industry specific)
- Social Media Publishing which could include Blogs, Articles, P/R
- Social Media Sites such as Face Book, Twitter, My Space, Digg, Mashable, Technorati,
- Emails
- Direct Mail
- Advertising including Pay Per Click and Traditional methods

Once a Prospect enters our system, we have to meet their expectations. Failure at any point can result in the loss of that prospect. Over stepping our relationship can end the relationship early. By following the clicks of what they are responding to in Newsletters and/ or Email responders, we get an idea of what interests them.

We can keep inviting them to engage in personal contact or what ever process we like to create a customer. After a period, it is also prudent to contact them personally to see if we are on track and/or can accelerate the process.

In the information gathering stages, executives may be friendly leading us to believe it's a genuine lead. We can't be deceived into thinking we are their choice. This is just their early evaluation and elimination process.

Websites as Capture Tools

The Internet is the most efficient media for attracting the best targets. Our optimized website has focused on a niche. The people in this niche that engage with our website by asking for more information may be our ideal Prospect.

Our website has a global reach. We can, of course, tailor it to a national or local reach.

But in any case, it has the most unlimited mass exposure of any media.

If we can target a niche, provide the visitors with Free Information, and then Follow up with an Email Responder program, we have a great opportunity to convert a Prospect to a Customer.

The internet Website needs three main components to be effective:

- It has to be Search Engine Friendly, i.e., have the elements or SEO that Search Engines expect.
- The site has to have keywords that identify your business so that you can be classified and ranked in a specific high volume niche.
- The site has to be popularized with Advertising, Link Exchanges, or Social Media Publishing so that it gains the Authority for high page ranking.

These can be built in stages. Generally the first two items are completed right away and step three is built gradually.

Social Media Marketing

Social Media is a culture as much as a venue. It stands for Free Permission based exchange. Its most valuable component is that information can be passed from user to user or information can be recommended (endorsed) for other users.

The essence of Information provided is that it has to be valuable content that is interesting or useful to readers. This creates a wide swath for viable content. Two of the most useful Social Media vehicles for businesses to provide their information is the Blog and Article writing.

They are an opportunity to provide information on what might be interesting or useful and link back to a website for the reader to get more information or learn more about the Provider.

If the Published information is key worded, it could wind up independently on the internet and create targeted traffic back to the website to read the information. The information could also be Tweeted or listed on Face Book and other sites to open the avenues of exposure.

The reason it is Social Media is that it is Permission Based, has transparency, easily transferred, and globally accessible from most any type of device.

Most practically Social Media includes Blogging, Article Writing, P/R, Emailing, Tweeting, Face Booking, Linked In, Forums, You Tubing, Flicker, and membership in a few hundred other news and social gathering online locations.

Emailing

The power of emailing is that it can be:

- Very specific to target groups,
- It can be permission based, and
- It can set up a correspondence between buyers and sellers
- It can be used to get link backs to a website or generate phone calls
- It can provide non invasive information while a trusted relationship is building

Responder Emailing can also be utilized to follow up with Prospects who have requested more information from one of your Media reaches. They could register their email on your website, one of your targeted emails, or from a Social Media Publication.

Blog sites built into a main website or built separately are terrific for creating a following of fans who want to receive messages or view the information automatically using an RSS feed.

Email can continue a non invasive contact process that measures the Prospect's interest and can even cause the adjustment of the message.

Email marketing can include links to Free Reports and White Papers to provide information, develop trust, and continue creating a relationship.

Integrating Websites, Emails and Social Media

By now you can see that you could create new relationships by making information available and following up with the Prospects.

The fact that all three are providing information and inviting a Prospect to learn more about your expertise can create a trusted relationship that is easier to convert.

The challenge is to create valuable content and get it exposed.

Next Step

If this has been helpful to you and you want to pursue it in greater depth, I would suggest the 57 page “Guide to Page One Google and New Customer Development”

It covers the 5 Strategies to Internet Marketing

1. Getting to page one Google
2. Attracting the Ideal Targets
3. Converting Targets to Prospects
4. Converting Prospects to Customers
5. Increasing Customer Revenues and Referrals

Most sites think their greatest problem is attracting traffic, but most are successful no more than 5% of the time in converting traffic to Customers. Relationship Marketing and the associated technologies can fill your customer funnel, convert suspects to Customers and then maintain the contact to build more business and referrals.

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